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ABSTRACT

This workbook is designed for people interested in facilitating Personal Futures Planning, a person-centered creative planning process designed to help people craft a life of meaning and contribution for a person with developmental disabilities. The facilitator of the Futures Planning process organizes a group to listen to the dreams and desires of the individual and take action over time to accomplish these dreams. The workbook is organized into five chapters discussing the capacities of effective facilitators. Chapter 1 examines basic values and assumptions about the change process and their impact on the facilitation process. Chapter 2 provides guidelines for creating the conditions that increase the likelihood that a plan will become a reality. Chapter 3 emphasizes the facilitator's capacity to manage a group learning process, using tools such as group graphics and meeting formats. Chapter 4 provides tools to help facilitators run an effective and lively meeting, through building an experience of community for everyone involved. Chapter 5 outlines ideas for renewing and maintaining the commitment of a group over time. (Contains 22 references.) (JDD)

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MAKING FUTURES HAPPEN

A MANUAL FOR FACILITATORS OF PERSONAL FUTURES PLANNING

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead

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Written by Beth Mount and Produced by Kay Zwernik

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INTRODUCTION

Planning a future

This workbook is designed for people interested in facilitating a person-centered planning process called Personal Futures Planning*. Personal Futures Planning is a creative process designed to help a group of people craft a life of meaning and contribution for the person who is the focus of the planning.

Through futures planning, people work together for social change for one individual. This requires planners to make a commitment to change the quality of life for that individual. Personal Futures Planning is not just another technique to be added to the human service industry of fashionable fixes. Meaningful Futures Plans are not constructed carelessly or mass-produced. Personal Futures Planning is an ongoing process of mutual education, discovery and adventure.

The facilitator of a Futures Planning process assumes the role of a master craftsperson. He or she is responsible for assuring that the plan and the process of its implementation reflect the beauty and embrace the struggle of people working together to build a better future for one person in one community. The facilitator serves this process by helping to organize a group to listen to the dreams and desires of the individual and take action over time to accomplish these dreams.

This workbook provides an overview of the basic values and approach of Personal Futures Planning, as well as a tool box of strategies to help facilitators along the way. The challenge to make a plan happen is the adventure we hope to share.

* This workbook complements the booklet, **It's Never Too Early, It's Never Too Late**, and other materials and workshops that describe the Personal Futures Planning approach and other new ways of thinking in human services. These references are provided in the Bibliography.

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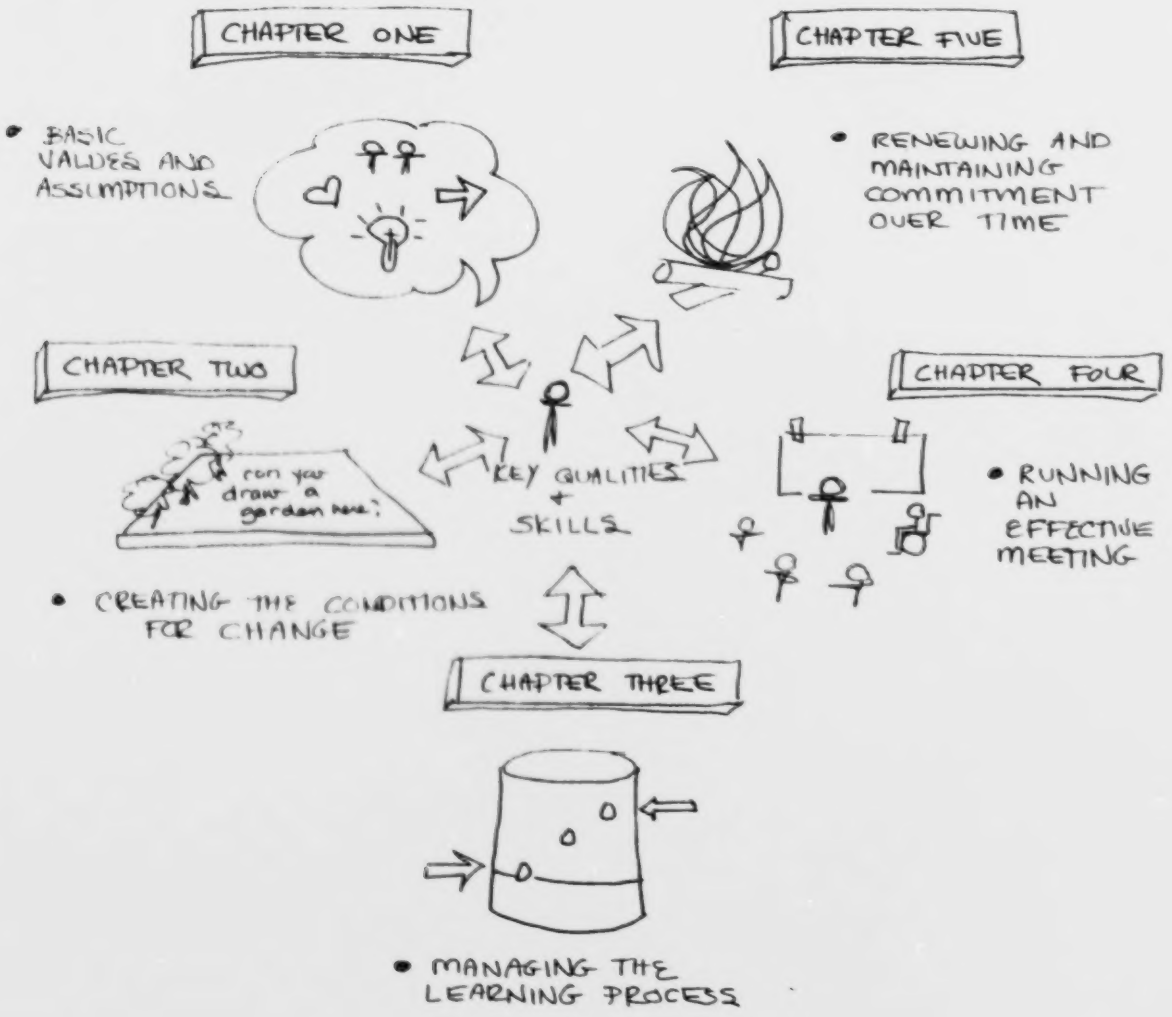
FIVE CAPACITIES OF EFFECTIVE FACILITATORS

change process


CHAPTER ONE
• BASIC VALUES AND ASSUMPTIONS
CHAPTER FIVE
• RENEWING AND MAINTAINING COMMITMENT OVER TIME
CHAPTER TWO
can you draw a garden hose?
• CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE
KEY QUALITIES + SKILLS
CHAPTER FOUR
• RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING
CHAPTER THREE
• MANAGING THE LEARNING PROCESS

When thinking of doing anything in community integration, think small, think face-to-face.

John McKnight

change process

OVERVIEW: FACILITATOR SKILLS AND CAPACITIES

Effective facilitators bring a number of qualities and skills to the planning process. Of five capacities identified here that help facilitiators do their work, the most important is their basic values and assumptions about the change process. This quality is also the hardest to describe. Chapter One provides an overview of **key assumptions** for facilitators to consider.

A second quality for facilitators is the capacity to evaluate and create the conditions needed to assure the implementation of a plan. The facilitator must negotiate or construct as many of these conditions as possible before beginning the planning process. Chapter Two provides guidelines for **creating the conditions** that increase the likelihood that a plan will become a reality.

Chapter Three emphasizes the facilitator's capacity to manage a group learning process. Effective facilitators **manage a lot of information** to help a planning group see new patterns and find new directions for action. Tools such as group graphics and meeting formats help facilitators empower, inform and motivate a group to take action. These tools are described in Chapter Three.

Effective facilitators are also responsible for helping a planning group have fun in the process of learning and planning together. A Personal Futures Planning group can become an experience of community for everyone involved while they build a community future for one person. Chapter Four provides tools to help facilitators **run an effective and lively meeting.**

Chapter Five outlines a number of ideas for **renewing and maintaining commitment** of a group over time. Long-term commitment to the process of change may be the greatest contributor to turning a vision into reality. The facilitator can create the conditions to encourage the creative action of a group over time.

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basic values

The future is not designed by great events, but by the small things people do wherever they are. No contribution is too small.

Beth Mount

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basic values

CHAPTER 1: BASIC VALUES AND ASSUMPTIONS

The effectiveness of the futures planning process depends on the underlying assumptions of the planning group. An effective facilitator develops skills and uses tools that help implement the basic values and assumptions discussed in this chapter.

LISTENING: Take Direction From The Person

Personal Futures Planning is a process that can help us listen to people with disabilities. Through it, people are telling us what they need to live good lives. They are telling us how organizations need to change to be more responsive and support more desirable futures for them. They are telling us how our communities can better include all of its members. They are teaching us how to build a better culture by learning to celebrate diversity, embrace imperfection and work together to accomplish our deepest desires.

Although some people may not speak these messages clearly, the seeds of their dreams are found in the experiences that bring them joy, excitement and engagement in life. Experiences that cause pain and sadness, boredom and frustration also inform us of unacceptable conditions that need to be changed. We must take the time to respect and listen to people and those who know them well to find the messages in their daily lives.

The facilitator must enter the futures planning process in the spirit of discovery. Who is this person? What are his or her unique gifts? What is the dream inside of this person? How will this dream challenge us to change systems, to build community? The answers to these questions will emerge in the planning process and as we implement our ideals over time.

When we really listen to people, they can be our teachers and our guides. We can find great hope, possibility and enthusiasm in the process of working together. The journey of working toward a personal dream is exciting and fun, difficult and frustrating. Overcoming the barriers and obstacles that prevent people from having and living their dreams is an act of empowerment. The promise of engagement in the struggle for personal growth and freedom is what initially attracted many of us to human services work. Learning to listen to people can bring us back to the reward of this work.

CREATIVITY: Work Toward Basic Ideals

When we really listen, we discover that every person has a dream. The facilitator helps shape the dream by recognizing possibilities, naming the desires within the person and imagining concrete ways the possibilities can be developed in the local community. The dream

changes over time as people learn together from their experiences. The facilitator guides the planning group in this creative process.

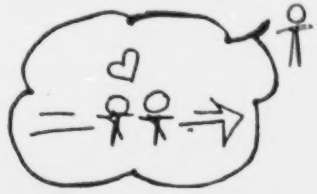
The five ideals or "frameworks for accomplishment" articulated by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle help name the dreams we find in people. The seeds of people's desires often reflect one or many of these five ideals, while each personal future is totally different and integrates the unique capacities of a person with the texture of the local community.

basic values

Five questions that guide the development of a dream:

1. How can we expand and deepen people's friendships?
2. How can we increase the presence of a person in local community life?
3. How can we help people have more control and choice in life?
4. How can we enhance the reputation people have and increase the number of valued ways people can contribute in community life?
5. How can we assist people to develop competencies?

Creativity and imagination are essential to developing the dream and finding strategies that close the gap between the dream and reality. O'Brien reminds us of the tension that builds when distance exists between reality and a dream. We can use this tension either to make things happen or to turn it upon ourselves and fade into helplessness and despair. The facilitator helps channel the tension and sometimes outrage of a group into constructive action for change.



COMMITMENT: Build Relationships Over Time

An effective Futures Plan should inspire people to act on behalf of the person with a disability. As the individual's dream is formed, people need to organize to make it happen. The facilitator develops a support network of people who take action to build the dream. The commitment to take action may require the group to change systems, resist old practices of discrimination and open doors to the local community.

Wolf Wolfensberger helps us understand the historical perspective that robs people with disabilities of their dreams. People are often denied basic human dignity and respect in human service settings where they have been labeled and separated from community life. Many people with disabilities have suffered from a lifetime of dehumanization, neglect or rejection by those who don't understand. When a group of people commit to resist these historic patterns of devaluation by working to build a life of meaning and contribution for one person, then remarkable outcomes are possible.

basic values

The facilitator may only be involved in the initial planning meetings, but he or she is responsible for encouraging long-term commitments by members of the planning group. The facilitator must take time to get to know the person who is the focus of the plan and to find the people most involved with the focus person now and those who may be willing to deepen their commitment to the person over time. These people are central to the discovery and planning process.

The greater the dream, the more likely the obstacles, resistance and disappointment. Commitment to the process invites both struggle and celebration. Commitment to the person and to building a positive future over time can carry people through these hard times.

DISCOVERY: Searching For Capacities And Opportunities

Searching for capacities and opportunities is essential to Personal Futures Planning. The facilitator guides the planning group not only to find capacities in the person, but also to find opportunities in the community to help implement the dream. Attention to capacities is often the only thing that will help a planning group endure difficult situations.

Attention to capacity does not imply a rose-colored view of the world. In fact, capacity thinking is based on the premise that things are a mess. People with disabilities face impassable obstacles to reaching their goals. Communities are riddled with social problems, fear and patterns of exploitation. Daily reality is often so grim for oppressed persons that the facilitator must find ways to identify, celebrate and build on every available opportunity.

This assumption is simple but so hard to implement. John McKnight has helped us see how easily we are drawn to deficiencies and obstacles. Human service workers in particular are often over-trained to focus on needs and gaps. Human service systems often depend on the production of need and the disabilities of people in order to maintain the status quo. If we only focus on deficiencies, we are often overwhelmed at the social conditions and obstacles we see.

The futures planning process is an occasion to search for opportunities in the person, in his or her network, in the community and in the system. A capacity view helps group members find many ways to take action and make a difference. The facilitator takes a key role in guiding the attention of a group to the opportunities that give hope.

COMMUNITY: Build Community In The Process Of Change

A facilitator of a planning meeting is a community builder. He or she inspires a future vision for life in the community. The facilitator invites people to have fun in the process of making it happen and constantly looks for ways that ordinary people can make a difference in the course of everyday life.

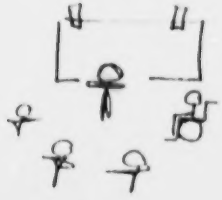
basic values

Many of us are hungry for the experience of community--for telling our stories and dreaming our dreams together, for arguing and fussing over what to do and laughing and crying in the process. The planning process itself should feel like community.

Does this sound like a standard ICF-MR IHP led by a QMRP (Intermediate Care Facility for the Mentally Retarded Individual Habilitation Plan led by a Qualified Mental Retardation Professional)? Not exactly. The futures planning process is more like a living room-based jam session for anybody on the block who is interested led by whomever is crazy enough to take charge of a rowdy group.

How do Personal Futures Planning meetings reflect the spirit of the community? First of all, they are usually held in a comfortable place in the neighborhood of the person asking for help. People qualify to attend by being interested. They are neighbors, family members, friends and human service workers. They often meet in the evening, if that time is the easiest for everyone to get together. Someone prepares something to eat and drink. People wear blue jeans and tennis shoes. The facilitator keeps a focus for the group in a way that allows people to cut loose. Children and pets are known to roam around the room. The person with a disability is central to the meeting. People gossip, take breaks and are usually late coming back together.

Another element of community is the continual search for informal support--the ways people make things happen without waiting for money or services. People are thinking "informal supports" when they realize that teenagers at high school can make things happen in the neighborhood, when they take problems to local church groups, or when people offer assistance that has little to do with their formal jobs or positions. Community means making things happen now.



WHY DOES PERSON-CENTERED PLANNING CHALLENGE US?

To be a human service worker means to serve the people we are paid to support. However, far too often we are serving the systems designed to support people.

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basic values

The demands of the systems often distract us from hearing the voice of the people. We may be engaged in lots of action, but this action may not be driven by the interests of the people.

This happens because the demands of the system often speak louder than the people we serve. We work to please our bosses, regulators and funders. The desires of the people are often quiet. There may be few external rewards for just spending time with people.

The demands of the system often offer us the promise of perfection, order and rationality. If we just get this paperwork done, meet these timelines, fill this quota, then maybe things will be better. The desires of people often bring us into the imperfection of it all. People's lives present us with utter chaos and disorder and other realities of the human condition. We have to look discrimination and poverty in the face. We may confront our own helplessness in changing the quality of another person's life.

The demands of the system often distance us from people. This distance relieves the discomfort that comes from feeling the pain and despair that many people live with every day. It relieves us from making the commitments to the person and to action that might disrupt the normal course of events of organizations and personal lives. The distance makes it possible to tolerate the injustice in our world today.

Listening to the desires of people invites us to listen to their pain and to look injustice in the face. We may have to accept that we can only do so much. But perhaps taking action on behalf of the person is more than enough. Perhaps a thousand acts that reflect the true desires of the people add up to the greatest change possible.

creating change

Things that are powerful are uncontrolled things.
David Wetherow

10

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CHAPTER 2: CREATING THE CONDITIONS FOR CHANGE

creating change

The futures planning process helps small groups of people listen to people with disabilities make commitments to work to change the quality of people's lives, create new possibilities out of seemingly impossible situations and build a better community in the process. A tall order for an individual planning process!

This chapter provides guidelines to help facilitators design an effective planning approach that includes the Futures Plan as one of a number of activities. The planning meeting, group techniques, meeting formats, facilitation skills and tools are only helpful when fertile conditions for change are cultivated. The facilitator must decide if these conditions exist or if they can be developed.

This chapter emphasizes the role of the facilitator as a change agent who creates an effective planning practice at the individual level while developing other approaches to change at the organizational and community level. Change is most likely to occur in people's lives when the Personal Futures Planning process is part of an overall approach to organizational and community change that we call "Person-Centered Development Projects." A story of such a Development Project is provided to illustrate an approach to organizational change using Personal Futures Planning as a tool.

THE BASIC STEPS OF AN EFFECTIVE PLANNING PROCESS

An effective planning process includes several basic steps. The design of a planning process that includes these steps is far more important than the details of each component. The greatest amount of quality change occurs in people's lives when:

1. People begin with a clear and shared appreciation of the gifts and capacities of the focus person.
2. Committed people develop a common understanding of a specific positive future: a common dream.
3. Committed people agree to meet regularly to brainstorm and make commitments to act. These people are often those who spend a lot of time with the person or have known the person for a long time.
4. The group includes at least one person—a family member, advocate, community member, staff person or the person who is the focus of the planning—who is a **champion** of the dream. This person makes extraordinary efforts to bring the dream into reality.
5. At least one agency or community organization is committed to supporting the implementation of the plan.

creating change

CREATING THE CONTEXT FOR A PLAN TO BE IMPLEMENTED

Questions for Facilitators

The following guidelines can help facilitators design a process that has the greatest potential for being implemented.

1. Does the person, parents or a committed advocate want life to be different somehow? Do **people feel stuck** in their current situation, and do they have the energy to change things?
2. Are a few people willing to **meet on a regular basis** to solve problems over time? Are they willing to contribute their time to the process if necessary?
3. Does this planning group include at least one person with a **strong commitment** to act on behalf of the person? If not, are you, the facilitator, willing to assume this role?
4. Does the planning group include at least one person who can act as a **facilitator**? A facilitator must take the lead in recording ideas, keeping a focus and helping others follow through on commitment. If such a person does not emerge, are you, the facilitator, able to stay in the group until internal leadership develops?
5. Does the planning group include at least one person who is well **connected to the local community**? If not, can you find someone who can assist in building bridges to the local community?
6. Is the group, focus person or family **connected to other people** who face similar obstacles and/or are involved in a similar process? If not, can you connect them to other groups or people as a source of renewal and support?
7. Is at least one involved **agency committed to organizational change** as a result of what is learned from this process? Does this agency support the time and commitment required of staff? If not, can you develop an interest within an existing agency to listen to the results and implications of the planning process?
8. Are **resources available** for the flexible, individualized supports required to implement a personal plan? If not, can you identify or create these supports within existing systems as a pilot program or by seeking local grants or other forms of assistance?

A MODEL PERSON-CENTERED DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

Alternative Living Inc. (ALI) is a residential program providing services to 80 people in Maryland. ALI launched the "Citizenship Project," an agency-wide approach to help its staff rethink the design of services by taking direction from the people served by the agency. The Citizenship Project illustrates a Person-Centered Development Project using Personal Futures Planning as a tool for change.

The staff members of ALI attended a two-day retreat at which they examined the needs of the people served by the agency by developing Futures Plans. Sixteen people served by the agency were chosen to be involved in these intensive Personal Future Planning sessions. The sessions were led by an external facilitator who helped identify administrative and organizational issues that emerged from the Personal Futures Plans.

Based on these 16 plans, management made significant organizational changes. Within the first year, 20 people moved from group settings to independent arrangements with roommates or staff members of their choice. Staff roles and responsibilities were revised. Many major changes in housing, staffing, funding and program priorities occurred as a result of the project and led to significant changes in the quality of life of the people served.

creating change

With the support of the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council, the agency also hired two local people to increase the connections of people in their local communities. These "bridge builders" developed community networks and informal supports to help people implement their plans. Many people developed new friendships and began new experiences in community life.

Management engaged families, the agency's board of directors and direct service staff members in all steps of the process. Many direct service staff members became the "champion" of an individual plan by taking a lead in its implementation. Many people became involved in the individual planning groups and the overall process of change.

For more information, contact:
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Alternative Living, Inc.
or
Jerry Kiracofe
Human Services Institute
5829 Banneker Road - Suite 201
Columbia, MD 21044

THE COMPONENTS OF AN EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

The story of ALI illustrates a holistic approach to change that uses Personal Futures Planning as a tool in the process. ALI used Personal Futures Planning and a number of other strategies for change to support development in the four areas illustrated below:

1. An effective project listens to the people being served and takes direction for organizational change and action from them.
2. An effective project helps staff members to engage and develop informal supports in the community.
3. An effective project influences formal supports to be more responsive to the people served by the agency.
4. An effective project engages a growing number of people in the process of making change happen.

• HOW CAN WE LISTEN TO THE PEOPLE SERVED?
FUTURES PLAN
?
• HOW CAN WE ENGAGE INFORMAL SUPPORTS IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY?
• HOW CAN WE INFLUENCE FORMAL SUPPORTS TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE?
• HOW CAN WE BUILD CAPACITY + COMMITMENT TO CHANGE BY GROWING NUMBERS OF PEOPLE?

The Personal Futures Planning facilitator works with others to ensure progress in these four areas. The facilitator creates as many conditions as possible to increase the likelihood that a plan will be implemented. An effective facilitator not only facilitates a successful planning meeting, but also constantly works to influence development of supports in the local community.

learning process

Empower people and families to jointly create solutions and opportunities.

David Wetherow

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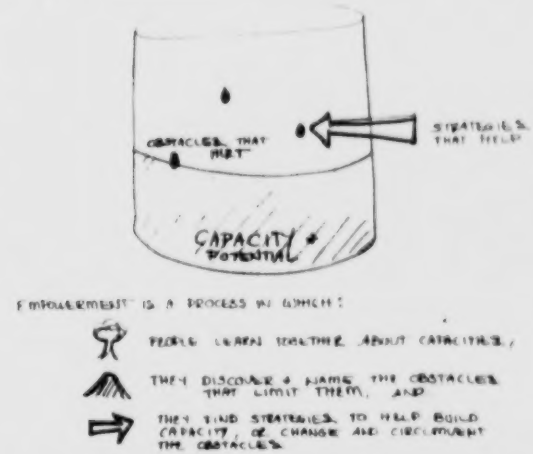
CHAPTER 3: MANAGING THE LEARNING PROCESS

learning process

An effective facilitator empowers planning groups by helping people learn together through dialogue and reflection. This chapter describes the tools and frameworks of the Personal Futures Planning process that help facilitators organize information so people learn from their experience and take action for change.

A symbol of the basic structure of the empowerment process is the cup illustrated below. This cup represents all the potentials within a living system--an individual, an organization, or a community. Capacities and opportunities exist in every cup. At the same time, however, obstacles exist, like leaks in the cup, that drain a person of his or her capacity or power. Empowerment is a process in which people learn together about their capacities, they discover and name the obstacles that limit them, and they find strategies to help build capacity and change or circumvent the obstacles.


CAPACITY
Potential
EMPOWERMENT IS A PROCESS IN WHICH:
PEOPLE LEARN TOGETHER ABOUT CAPACITIES,
THEY DISCOVER & NAME THE OBSTACLES THAT LIMIT THEM, AND
THEY FIND STRATEGIES TO HELP BUILD CAPACITY, OR CHANGE AND CIRCUMVENT THE OBSTACLES

A SYMBOL FOR EMPOWERMENT

The futures planning process aids the empowerment process by helping people organize and name their experience so they can change the circumstances that limit them. People with disabilities and the people who work with them daily are often submerged in what Freire (1982) calls a "culture of silence." People are mere objects in this state and are unable to take upon themselves the struggle to change the structures of the system or the society that limit them. This is a condition common to all oppressed groups of people, but perhaps even more overwhelming for people with disabilities because many literally cannot speak.

People can learn to speak for themselves when the experts and authorities around them engage in a process of mutual education.

People are liberated as a result of their own ability to reflect and act to change the situations they are in. This is the process Freire calls pedagogy, and true pedagogy requires that people be active and responsible through dialogue and reflection. An effective facilitator creates the conditions in which dialogue, reflection and mutual education are likely to occur.

The facilitator of a Personal Futures Plan uses **group graphics** and **meeting frameworks** to aid the process of group dialogue and reflections. Group graphics help people organize information by color-coding their experience. Meeting frameworks help people organize information and provide a focus for the group. A review of these tools is provided in this chapter along with detailed example.

USING GRAPHICS TO FACILITATE LEARNING

Information collected during the Personal Futures Planning Process is organized and portrayed using group graphics. Group graphics (Sibbet, 1980) is a process

learning process

designed to assist people in groups to work together, share goals, remember commitments and solve problems cooperatively.

A facilitator records the comments of the group using colors, symbols and words on large pieces of flip chart paper, producing a series of pictures that illustrate the patterns of a person's life. At least three colors are used to code information. Positive experiences and opportunities are recorded in green, negative experiences and barriers are recorded in red, and basic information and strategies are recorded in blue. Many examples of these graphic descriptions are provided in this chapter.

Color-coding helps the group see and name patterns in the person's opportunities and barriers. As people share a common understanding of these opportunities and barriers, they are more likely to find strategies to make the most of opportunities while going through or around the obstacles. This manner of discovery is critical to the pedagogical process.

An additional advantage of group graphics is that many people with communication problems do relate to visual or pictorial language. Agam (1984) found that when a visual alphabet that aids both rational and intuitive thinking was introduced in Israeli schools, children with disabilities rose to the top of the class. Some people feel left out of traditional planning meetings because they don't understand the language. Many of us are more likely to interact in a planning process when we are able to "see what we say."

USING MEETING FRAMEWORKS TO ORGANIZE INFORMATION

Meeting frameworks help facilitators and groups organize information. Frameworks, sometimes referred to as "maps," provide a focus for group work. These frameworks are often prepared in advance on large flip chart paper that is taped on the wall or spread out on a table. Four meeting frameworks described here correspond with the four components of the Futures Planning Process:

1. **Exploring commitment:** Designing the planning process.
   The facilitator meets with the focus person and others to determine:
   a. Who should be involved in the planning process,
   b. How the process should be adapted to fit unique challenges and opportunities, and
   c. What the facilitator can do to create the conditions that will make the plan most likely to be implemented.

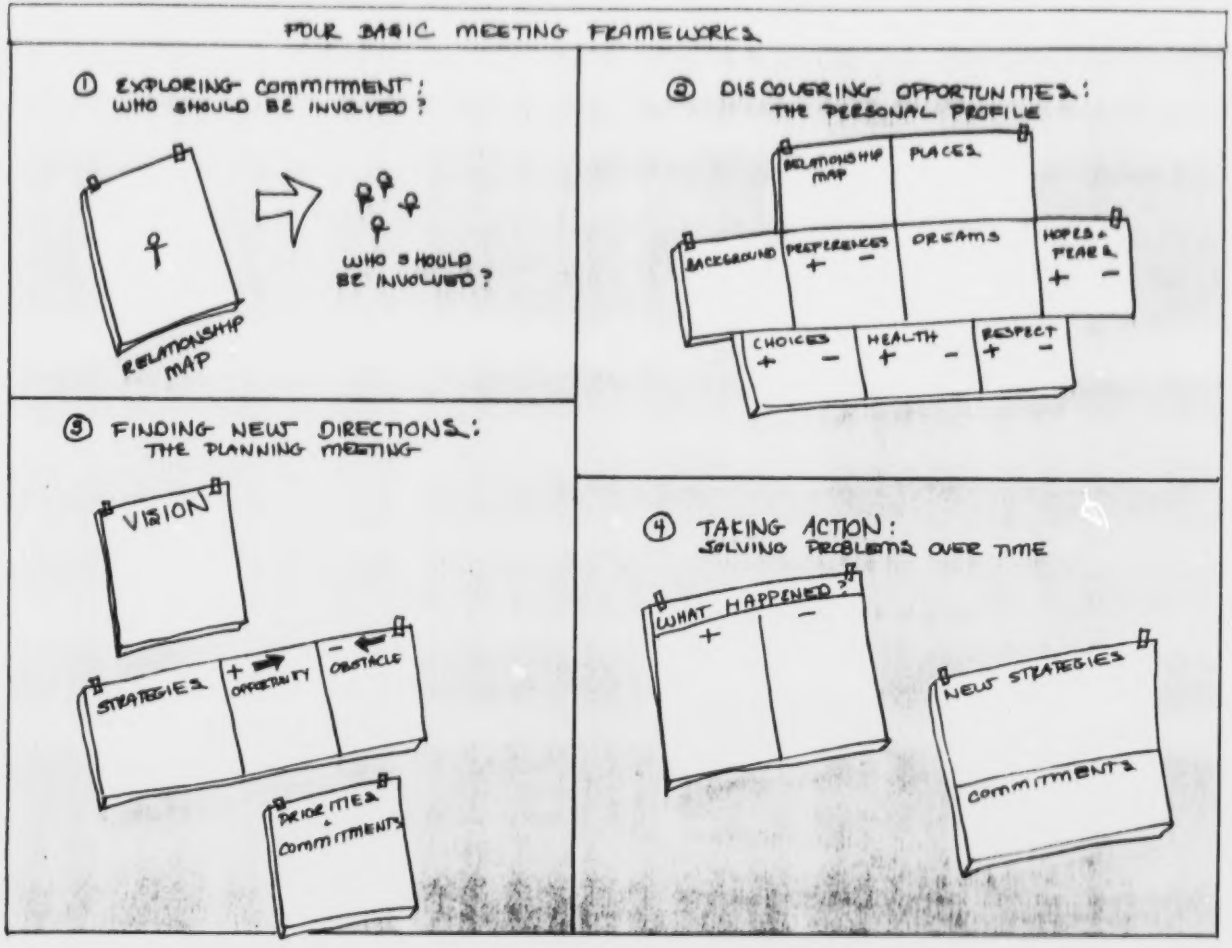
2. **Discovering opportunities:** The personal profile.
   The facilitator meets with the focus person and a small group of friends, family and staff members to:
   a. Build a description of the life story of the person, opportunities and capacities to work with and conditions that challenge future development, and
   b. Lay the groundwork for the planning meeting.

3. **Finding new directions:** The planning meeting.
   The facilitator meets with a larger group of people involved with the focus person to:
   a. Build a plan for implementation, and
   b. Help people make commitments to action.

4. **Taking action:** Solving problems over time.
   The facilitator meets with the group that agrees to meet regularly to:
   a. Reflect on the experience of implementation, and
   b. Discover the next steps for action.

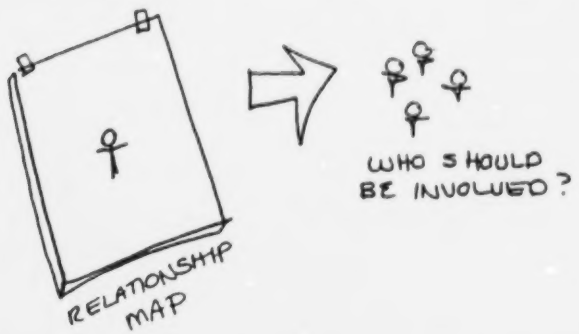
FOUR BASIC MEETING FRAMEWORKS

learning process



learning process

MEETING FRAMEWORK 1: EXPLORING COMMITMENT



DESIGNING THE PLANNING PROCESS

This session helps the facilitator and focus person design a planning process that will fit the situation. A **relationship map**, illustrated on the next page, is used to identify people interested in participating in various phases of the process. This framework helps describe:

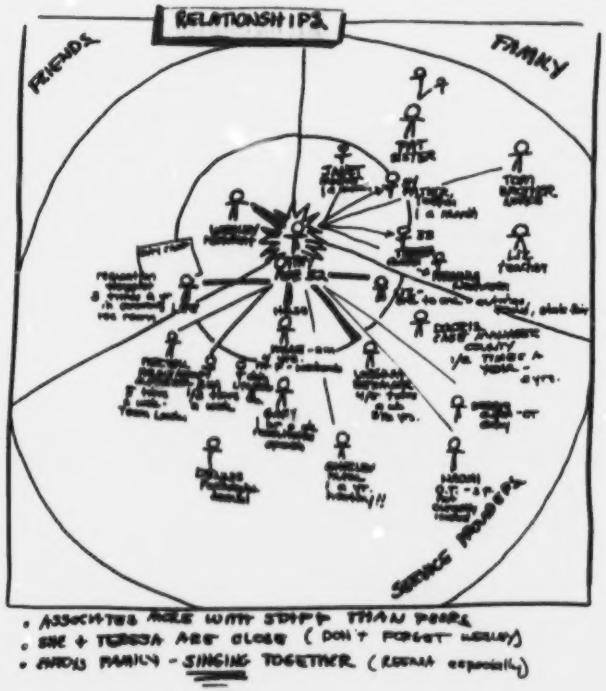
1. Who should be invited to the profile meeting.
2. Who really wants this planning process to happen.
3. Who is most committed to change.
4. Who is connected to the local community.
5. Who is connected to local agencies that may offer assistance.

The facilitator works with the focus person and important family members to decide how to set up the profile meeting. These questions should be addressed:

1. How can the focus person be included? What kinds of personal assistance will increase his or her participation?
2. How can the focus person extend the invitations to people who might come? What support will he or she need to do this?
3. Who will take the lead in gathering the information during the meeting? What planning tools will be most helpful in this situation?
4. When can key people get together?
5. Where is the most comfortable place to meet?

Finally, the facilitator examines the situation in advance to see which conditions exist that make implementation of the plan most likely. The facilitator arranges needed supports when critical conditions are missing. The facilitator decides how much personal support he or she will provide based on an overall assessment of the relationship map.

RELATIONSHIP MAP



learning process

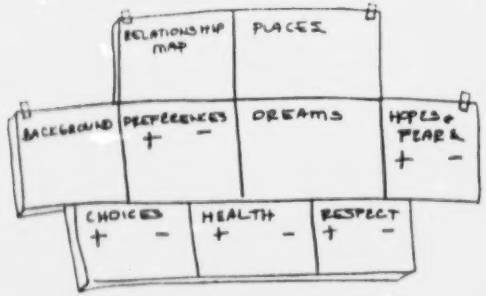
Purpose: To identify personal support and assistance.

Helps: The most important people in the focus person's life. People interested in planning together over time. Opportunities for building relationships.

Recording:

1. Put each person on the map with a symbol and a name.
2. Cluster them by family, friends and paid staff members.
3. Indicate in **green** those who are most important and/or most effective.
4. Highlight in **yellow** those who might be involved in an ongoing planning group.
5. At the bottom of the page, write a summary statement reflecting what you observe about relationships.
6. Cluster them by family, friends and paid staff.
7. Record how long people have known each other.

MEETING FRAMEWORK 2:
DISCOVERING OPPORTUNITIES



THE PERSONAL PROFILE

The Personal Profile provides an opportunity for the facilitator, the focus person, friends and others to create a description of the current life of the person. The Personal Profile can help the facilitator and others:

1. Get to know the person and listen to his or her view on life.
2. Develop a shared appreciation of the gifts and capacities within this person, as well as the barriers and struggles he or she faces.
3. Value and include the perspectives of family members, direct service workers, friends and other people who may often be excluded from a planning process.
4. Strengthen the voice of the focus person by clarifying his or her interests and desires and naming the things that prevent expression of these things.
5. Establish a record of how things are now for future reflection.
6. Translate human service jargon into a common language.
7. Discuss values, options and feelings in an informal setting.

The facilitator uses a number of frameworks illustrated on the next page to help describe a person's life. The basic frameworks describe opportunities and reveal clues to build on in the future. Optional frameworks provide additional information when needed. A detailed description of each framework is provided in this chapter.

The profile meeting stimulates many ideas and possibilities to be discussed during the planning meeting. The following issues should be resolved before the planning meeting:

1. Who should be invited to the planning meeting?
2. How will the focus person be involved?

learning process

3. How will the focus person invite people to attend?
4. When is the best time to include important people?
5. Where is the best place to meet?

DISCOVERING OPPORTUNITIES: The Personal Profile

BASIC FRAMEWORKS

Relationship Map:
Identifies opportunities for support and assistance.

Places Map:
Describes the pattern of current daily life.

Background Map:
Provides an overview of the life experience of the focus person and his or her family.

Preferences Map:
Describes personal preferences, gifts and interests, as well as conditions to avoid.

Dreams Map:
Describes ideas about personal dreams and desires for the future. Determines time frame for work.

Hopes and Fears:
Describes how people feel about the opportunities and obstacles they see to making things happen.

OPTIONAL MAPS

Choices Map:
Describes decisions made by the person and decisions made by other people. Clarifies needs for personal assistance.

Health Issues:
Describes conditions that promote or threaten the focus person's health.

Respect Map:
Describes personal characteristics that can create barriers to community acceptance. Other maps invented by the facilitator to help describe the patterns in the person's life.

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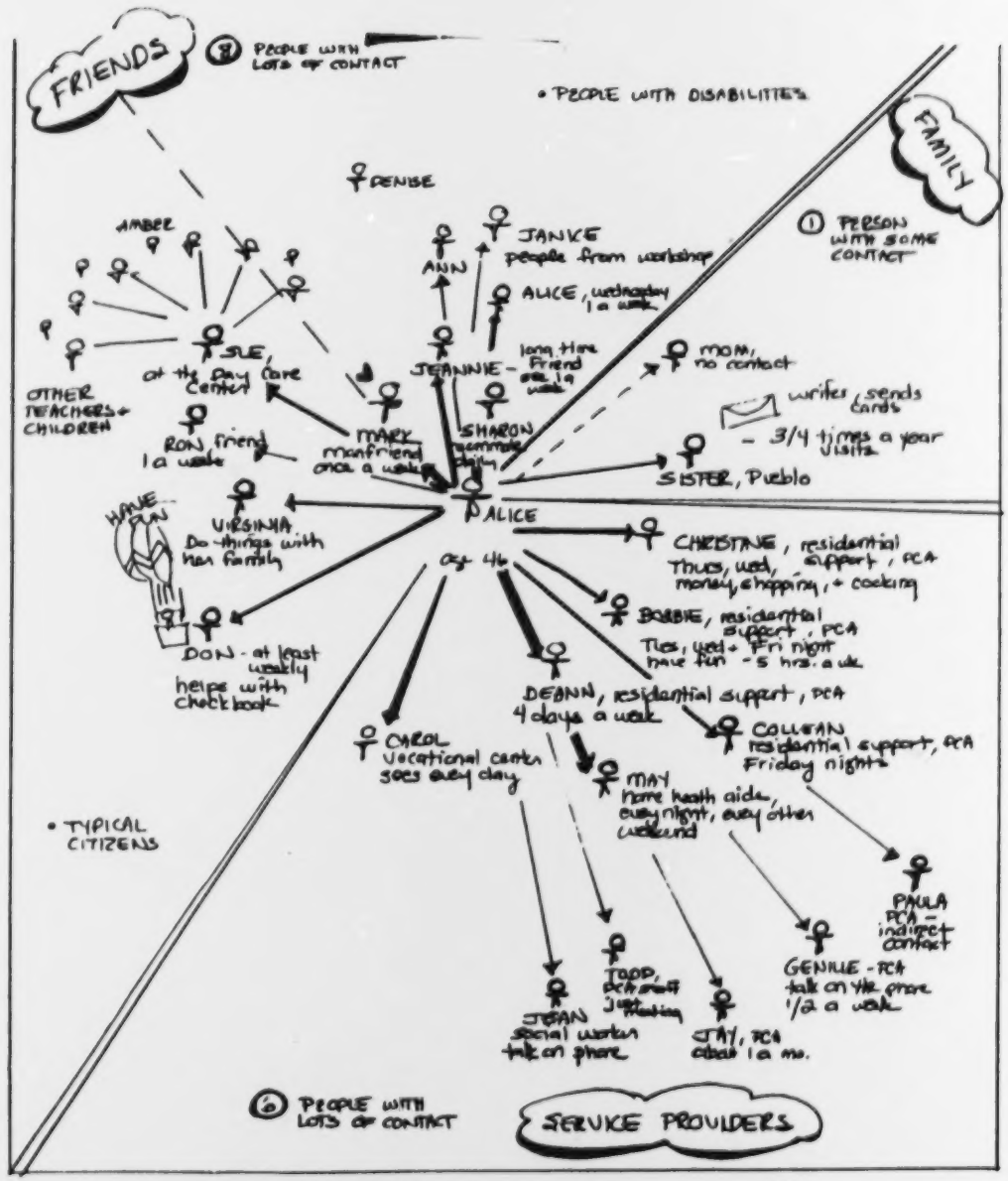
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

RELATIONSHIP MAP

Purpose:
To identify personal support and assistance.

Helps Illustrate:
The most important people in the focus person's life. People interested in planning together over time. Opportunities for building relationships.

Recording Tips:
Put each person on the map with a symbol and a name. Cluster them by family, friends and paid staff members. Indicate in **green** those who are most important and/or most effective. Record how long people have known each other. Indicate in **red** people who cause problems or are least effective. Do you see any patterns? Highlight in **yellow** those who might be involved in an ongoing planning group. At the bottom of the page, write a summary statement reflecting what you observe about relationships.


FRIENDS
8 PEOPLE WITH LOTS OF CONTACT
• PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
FAMILY
DENISE
AMBER
JANICE
people from workshop
ANN
ALICE, weekday 1 a week
1 PERSON WITH SOME CONTACT
SUE
at the Day Care Center
JEANNIE - long time Friend one a week
MOM, no contact
writes, sends cards
- 3/4 times a year visits
OTHER TEACHERS + CHILDREN
RON friend 1 a week
MARY manfriend once a week
SHARON roommate daily
SISTER, Pueblo
HAND FAN
VIRGINIA Do things with her family
ALICE
age 46
CHRISTINE, residential support, PCA Thurs, wed, money, shopping, + cooking
BOBBIE, residential support, PCA Tues, wed + Fri night have fun - 5 hrs. a wk
DON - at least weekly helps with checkbook
DEANN, residential support, PCA 4 days a week
COLLEEN residential support, PCA Friday night
CHERYL Vocational center sees every day
MAY home health aide, every night, every other weekend
• TYPICAL CITIZENS
PAULA PCA - indirect contact
GENILLE - PCA talk on the phone 1/2 a week
TODD, PCA staff just starting
JEAN social worker talk on phone
JAY, PCA about 1 a mo.
6 PEOPLE WITH LOTS OF CONTACT
SERVICE PROVIDERS

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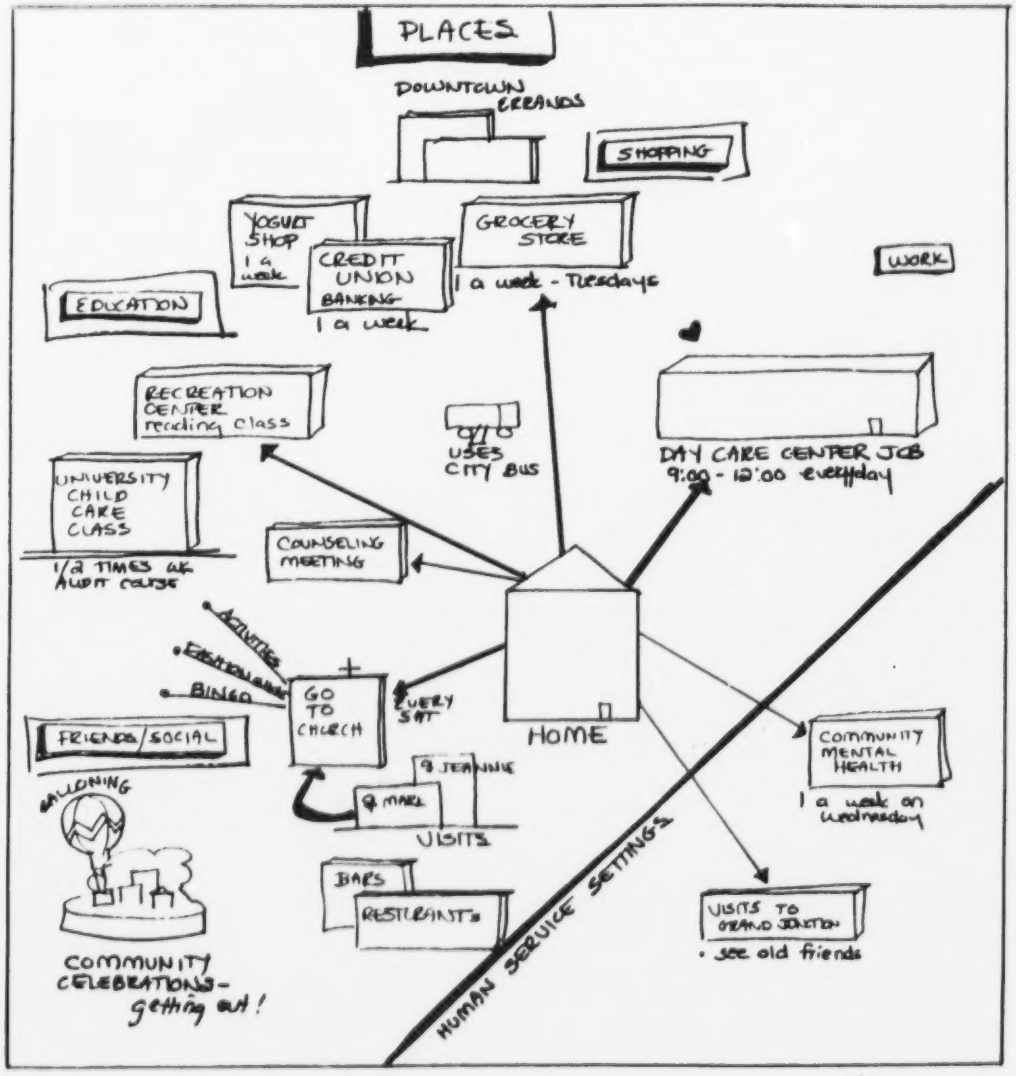
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

PLACES MAP

Purpose:
To describe the pattern of daily life.

Helps Illustrate:
How the focus person spends his or her time. Community to segregated settings used by this person. Existing opportunities for building community.

Facilitator Tips:
Make a picture of all the places used by this person. Put segregrated human service settings below a diagonal line or within a triangle. Put community settings above the line. Indicate the frequency and hours the person uses each place. Indicate in **green** the places the person most enjoys, places where he or she has more positive experiences. Indicate in **red** the places where the person has the least success. Note the reason why. Indicate family visits, other homes, community associations and memberships.



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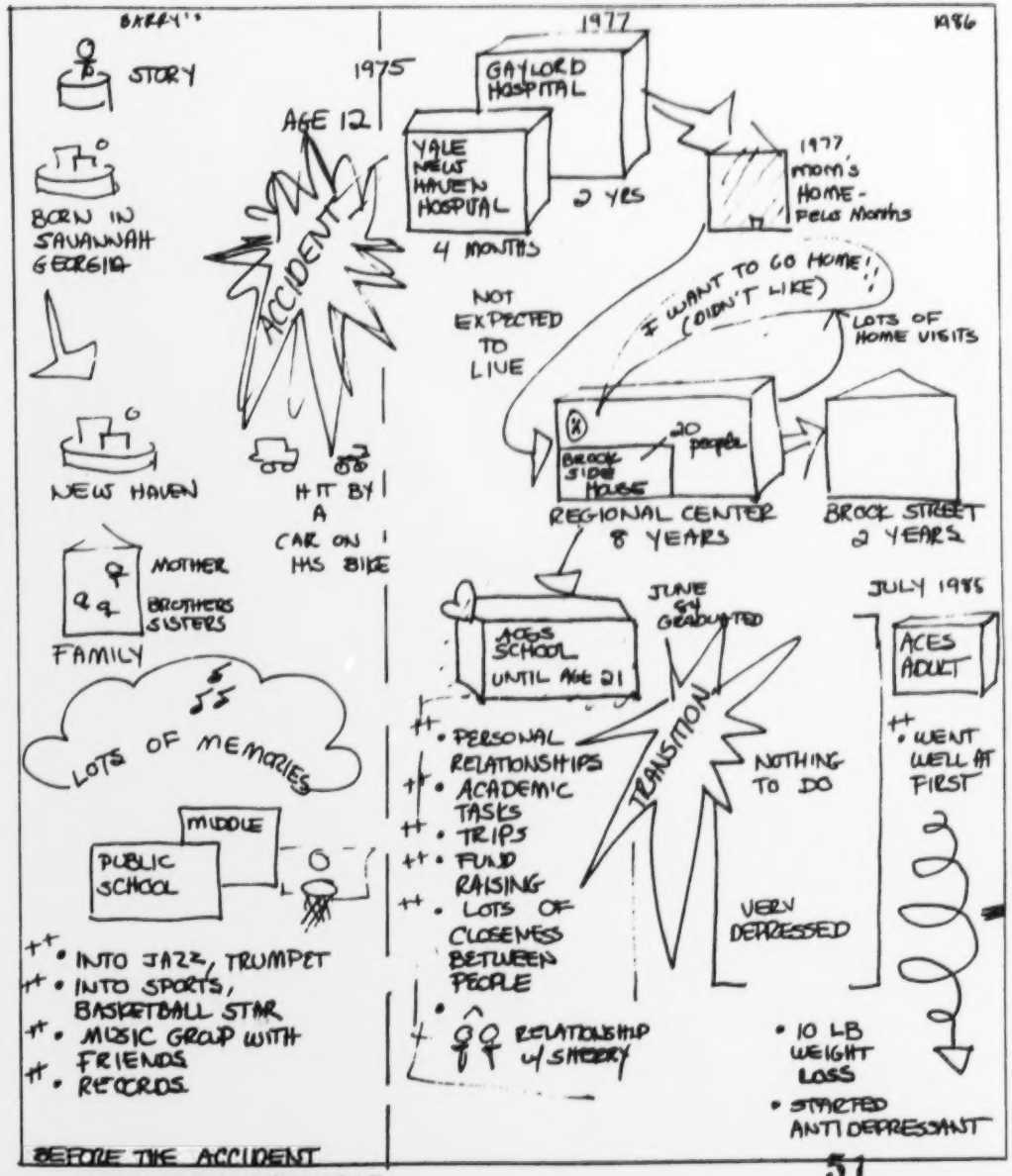
BASICS: PERSONAL LIFE HISTORY

BACKGROUND MAP

Purpose:
To understand the life experience of the focus person and his or her family.

Helps Illustrate:
Positive experiences from the past to build on. Appreciation of traumas, loss and grief in life. Celebration of accomplishments. Opportunities in the present as a result of the past.

Facilitator Tips:
Identify when and where was the person born. Identify places the person has lived--how many life changes? Identify educational settings (or lack of them). Indicate crisis and problems in **red.** Note good times and positive milestones in **green**. Summarize opportunities from the past to build on.



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learning process

LIFE EXPERIENCES

IDENTIFYING PERSONAL PREFERENCES

Purpose:
To discover capacities to build on and conditions to avoid.

Helps Illustrate:
Patterns in the gifts, potential, interest and unique contributions of the person. Patterns in the conditions that block or challenge development opportunities to build on in the future.

Facilitator Tips:
List everything people can think of. Decipher all human service jargon, technical language and labels into common language. Look for patterns in things that engage or interest people and things that don't.

Things that "work"
(create interest, aliveness, engagement, and motivation)

- Loves the job at the day care center. Likes working with children, likes to tell them stories from the talking book.
- Good at tying shoe laces for them, helping them learn their colors.
- Good at setting up lunch, likes the field trips, too.
- Likes to be independent. Likes to transfer self. Wants to be able to do everything on her own.
- Likes animals, taking care of them, especially rabbits. Would like to have a puppy.
- Loves people in general. Likes one-to-one time to talk about intimate things. Loves to joke, laugh.
- Likes to go out, to go dancing.
- Loves to cook, to cook for people.
- Likes to go into the country and smell the air, enjoy the scenery.
- Likes living with Sharon.
- Likes to knit and do handwork.
- Karen is a good teacher. She is good at teaching other people how to work with her.
- Good at knowing what she wants.
- Likes self-advocacy, speaking out, working for policy change.
- Likes growing plants.

Things that "don't work"
(create boredom, upset, depression, and frustration)

- Doesn't like not being paid for work.
- When my wheelchair doesn't work and when the batteries are low.
- Not having the funding for adaptive equipment.
- Transportation costs, especially after 6:00 p.m. Have to plan 48 hours in advance to give notice for vans.
- Obtaining early morning personal aide services and late night also. Has to plan a lot of activities around aide hours.
- Hard to find quality aides. Has to teach each new person what to do.
- Accessibility to existing apartment is poor.
- Can't find a good place to dance.
- When roommate is in a bad mood.

learning process

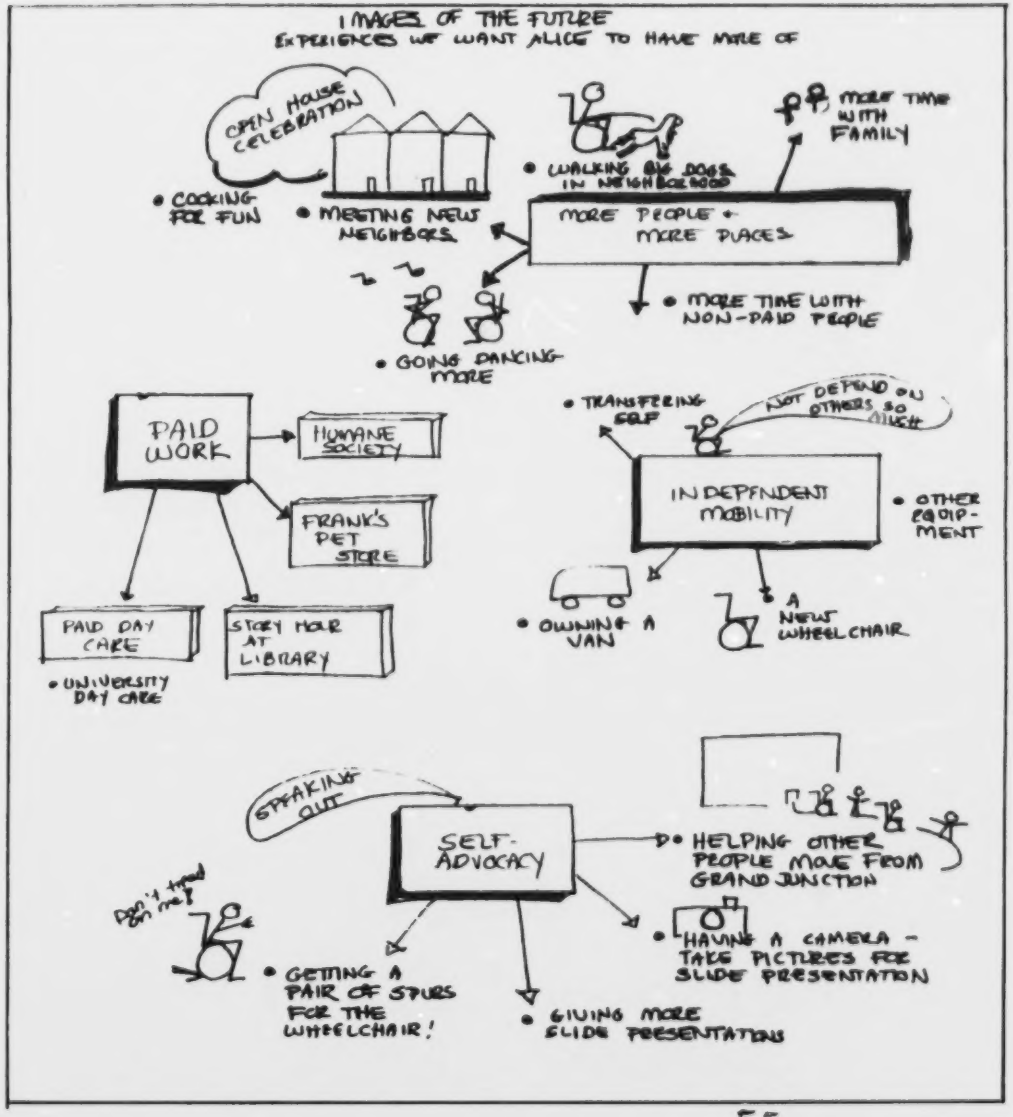
IMAGES OF THE FUTURE

CLARIFYING DREAMS ABOUT THE FUTURE

Purpose:
To explore inner images about desires and dreams for the future.

Helps Illustrate:
The experiences the focus person wants to have. The dreams of the person for a home, a job, community life and personal life.

Facilitator Tips:
You may need to ask the question many different ways. You may want to provide examples of other people who have similar dreams and have made them happen.


IMAGES OF THE FUTURE
EXPERIENCES WE WANT ALICE TO HAVE MORE OF
OPEN HOUSE CELEBRATION
• COOKING FOR FUN
• MEETING NEW NEIGHBORS
• WALKING BIG DOGS IN NEIGHBORHOOD
MORE TIME WITH FAMILY
MORE PEOPLE + MORE PLACES
• MORE TIME WITH NON-PAID PEOPLE
• GOING DANCING MORE
PAID WORK
HUMANE SOCIETY
FRANK'S PET STORE
PAID DAY CARE
• UNIVERSITY DAY CARE
STORY HOUR AT LIBRARY
• TRANSFERING SELF
NOT DEPEND ON OTHERS SO MUCH
INDEPENDENT MOBILITY
• OTHER EQUIPMENT
• OWNING A VAN
A NEW WHEELCHAIR
SPEAKING OUT
SELF-ADVOCACY
• HELPING OTHER PEOPLE MOVE FROM GRAND JUNCTION
• HAVING A CAMERA - TAKE PICTURES FOR SLIDE PRESENTATION
• GETTING A PAIR OF SPURS FOR THE WHEELCHAIR!
• GIVING MORE SLIDE PRESENTATIONS

learning process

OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES

HOPES AND FEARS MAP

Purpose:
To describe how people feel about the future.

Helps Illustrate:
How life looks through the eyes of the focus person and those who know him or her well. How optimistic or pessimistic people feel about their desires. How the obstacles and fears compare to the hopes and opportunities they see.

Facilitator Tips:
Identify what kinds of things, fears, discrimination, lack of resources, etc., are working against this person as he or she pursues a desirable future. Identify barriers to overcome. Identify what is working with this person. What hopes, opportunities and other forms of support will help him or her overcome these barriers?

Opportunities/Hopes

- We have discovered many accessible places in the community.
- Moving to a new apartment complex soon that has sidewalks and good accessibility.
- The vocational program responded to the day care idea. They offered back-up support.
- We have laid a lot of groundwork that we can build on.
- There are many opportunities for self-advocacy.

Obstacles/Fears

- Medicaid and Medicare are so complex. It's so hard to get needed equipment and supports.
- Not having sidewalks in this neighborhood.
- As always, transportation.
- Having to schedule her life around the schedules of health aides.
- Providers are still not "servants" in the true sense. They still maintain a lot of control over people. People still have to accommodate to schedules of paid staff. They are still mostly dependent on these people.

learning process

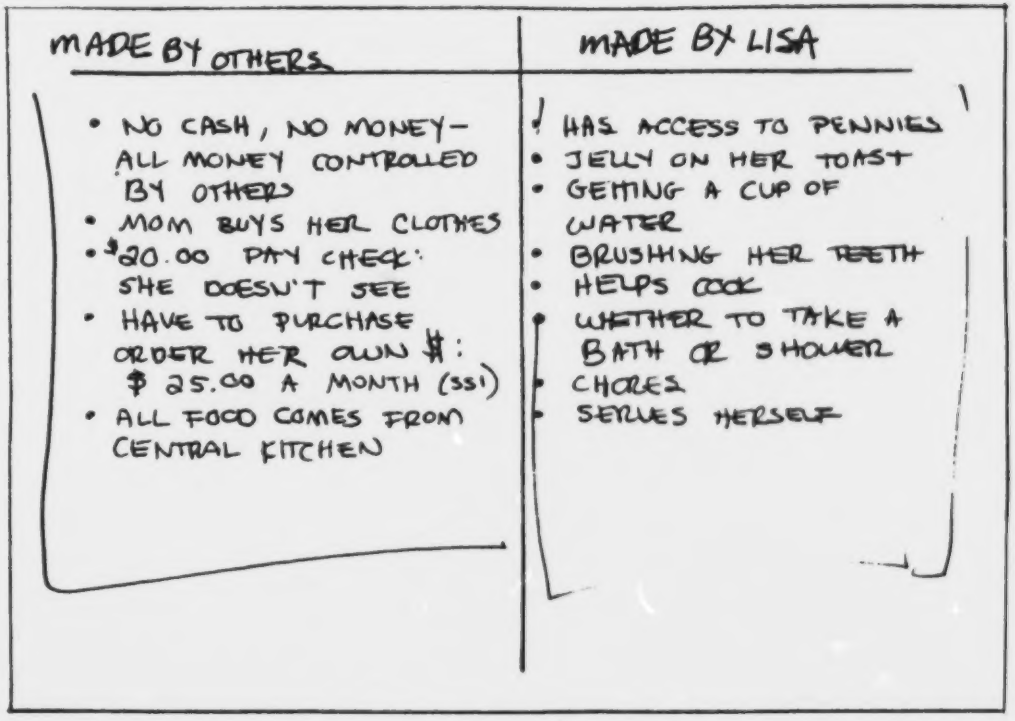
EXPRESSING AUTONOMY

CHOICES MAP

Purpose:
To describe personal autonomy as well as needs for assistance.

Helps Illustrate:
Degree to which the focus person has control over life decisions. Degree to which the person has control over personal care. Degree to which other people make decisions for the person. Degree to which other people must help the person with daily routines.

Facilitator Tips:
Indicate how much choice this person has in defining such things as a place to live, roommates, work, how to spend personal money, personal possessions, etc. Indicate how much choice the person has in everyday decisions, such as dressing, grooming and meal preparation.


MADE BY OTHERS
MADE BY LISA
• NO CASH, NO MONEY— ALL MONEY CONTROLLED BY OTHERS
• MOM BUYS HER CLOTHES
• $20.00 PAY CHECK: SHE DOESN'T SEE
• HAVE TO PURCHASE ORDER HER OWN #: $ 25.00 A MONTH (SSI)
• ALL FOOD COMES FROM CENTRAL KITCHEN
• HAS ACCESS TO PENNIES
• JELLY ON HER TOAST
• GETTING A CUP OF WATER
• BRUSHING HER TEETH
• HELPS COOK
• WHETHER TO TAKE A BATH OR SHOWER
• CHORES
• SERVES HERSELF

learning process

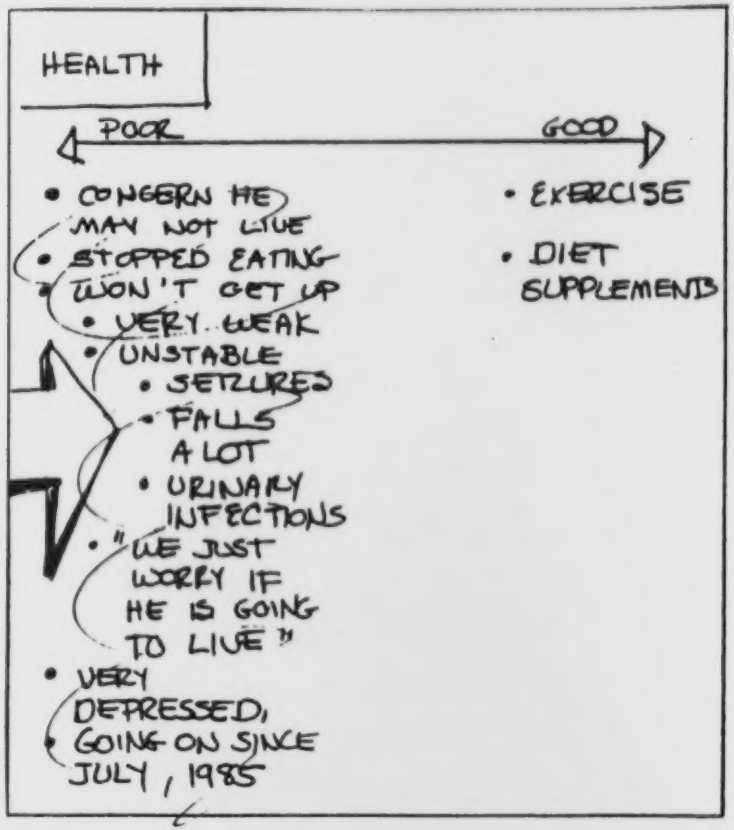
WELL-BEING AND UNHEALTHINESS

HEALTH ISSUES

Purpose:
To describe the conditions that promote or threaten the health of the focus person.

Helps Illustrate:
Real limitation imposed by health concerns. Conditions and routines that assure good health.

Facilitator Tips:
Note the indicators of good health as well as the symptoms or problems of poor health. Note special care and/or equipment required. Note medications. Record health-related factors, such as diet and exercise.



planning meeting. The framework for follow-up meeting helps the group review actions taken since the last meeting, both successful and less successful efforts. Once the review is completed, a strategy brainstorm session is repeated to help group members focus on the next steps for action.

Follow-along meetings provide repeated occasions for group members to solve problems over time. The meeting format can be varied to help renew the actions and commitments of the group. Chapter Five provides a number of strategies for renewing group energy over time.

learning process

FORMAT FOR FOLLOW-ALONG MEETINGS

Purpose:
To learn from efforts at implementing the ideals.

Helps Illustrate:
Action taken on behalf of the person--both successful and less successful efforts. Images of the future will change as reality changes. Sometimes opportunities will emerge that never seemed possible.

Facilitator Tips:
Invite people to review their activities since the last meeting. You may want to use the commitment list from the last session to get people started.

Once review is complete, repeat the strategy brainstorming session on priorities and commitments. Set the next meeting date and time.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS ON MEETING FORMATS AND TOOLS

After all this talk about group graphics, meeting formats, chart paper, profiles this and plans that, let's return to the original symbol for empowerment, the cup. The purpose of all this meeting paraphernalia is not to stun group members with techniques, but to help people make sense of their situation so they feel more competent to do something about it. If these meeting formats and tools get in the way, **don't use them**. Adapt the ideas to fit each situation, but don't get lost in the trees and miss the opportunity to help people find their way out of the forest!

Some people who are great at helping people think about their futures don't use any of these techniques. They use common sense to help people find a dream and make it happen. For example, one facilitator uses green, red and blue cards to help group members see patterns in their experience. Every time someone mentions an opportunity, they are handed a green card. Each time an obstacle is identified, a red card is given out. A blue card is passed when a creative strategy is born.

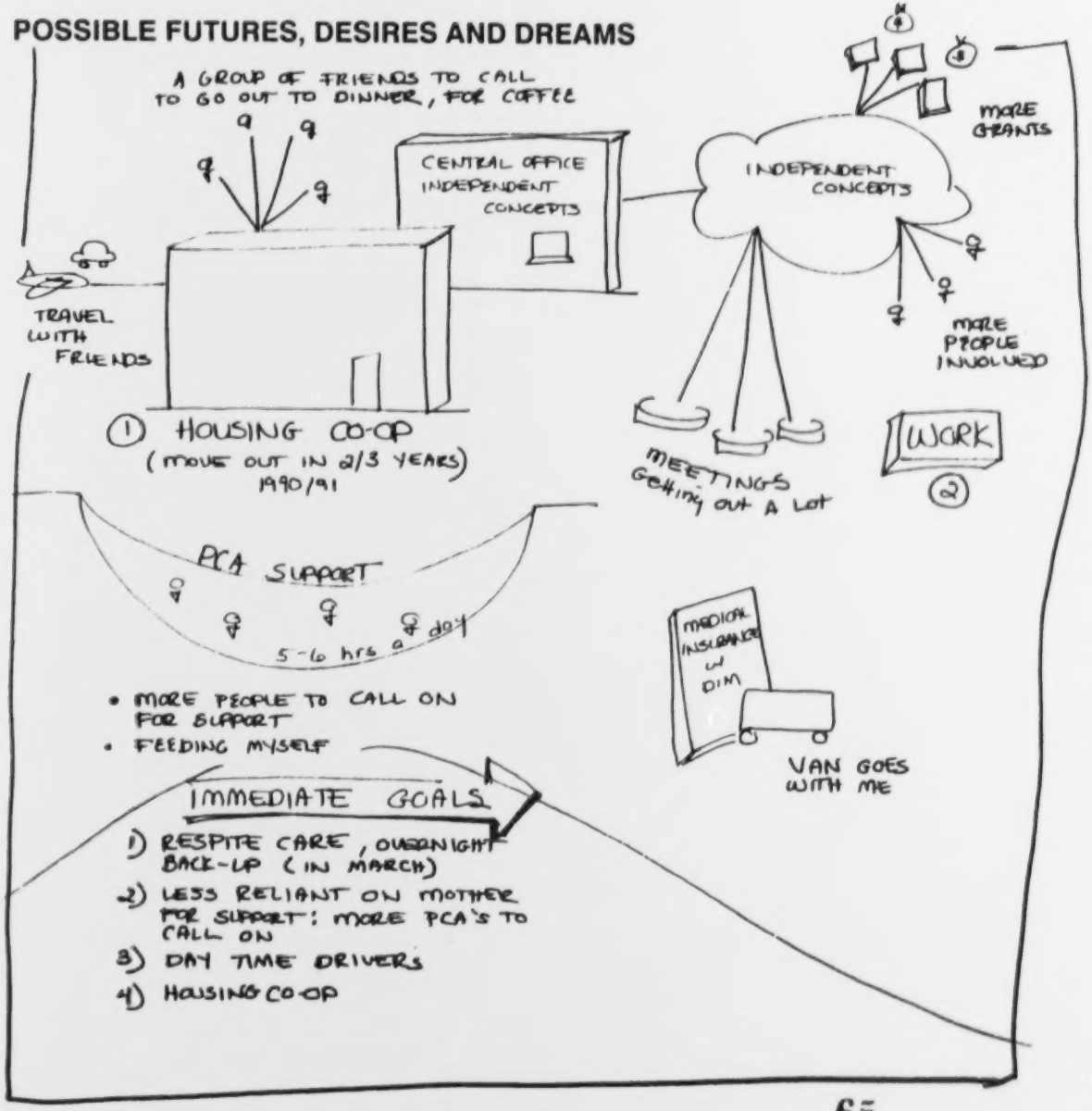
Another facilitator helps people by listing "uppers" (opportunities), "downers" (obstacles) and "ways out" (strategies). One facilitator helps a group write stories or a song to describe a future dream. Sometimes people make collages of these dreams. Another effective facilitator helps group members pray about the situation. Be creative! Facilitators should use the tools and techniques that make sense to them. The tools suggested in this manual are effective when facilitators like graphics and find frameworks helpful.

Regardless of the technique, all of these facilitators share the following:

1. They help people focus on capacities and opportunities.
2. They help people describe a dream.
3. They help people take action to make it happen.
4. They never deny obstacles.
5. They help people get excited and engaged in the process of working together.

Effective facilitators help people find the power to change their situation, and they stay with them through the struggle to make it happen.

POSSIBLE FUTURES, DESIRES AND DREAMS


A GROUP OF FRIENDS TO CALL TO GO OUT TO DINNER, FOR COFFEE
CENTRAL OFFICE INDEPENDENT CONCEPTS
INDEPENDENT CONCEPTS
MORE GRANTS
MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED
TRAVEL WITH FRIENDS
① HOUSING CO-OP
(MOVE OUT IN 2/3 YEARS)
1990/91
MEETINGS
Getting out A Lot
WORK
②
PCA SUPPORT
5-6 hrs a day
MEDICAL INSURANCE W DIM
VAN GOES WITH ME
• MORE PEOPLE TO CALL ON FOR SUPPORT
• FEEDING MYSELF
IMMEDIATE GOALS
1) RESPITE CARE, OVERNIGHT BACK-UP (IN MARCH)
2) LESS RELIANT ON MOTHER FOR SUPPORT; MORE PCA'S TO CALL ON
3) DAY TIME DRIVERS
4) HOUSING CO-OP

planning together

"We must remember that one determined person can make a significant difference, and that a small group of determined people can change the course of history."

Sonia Johnson

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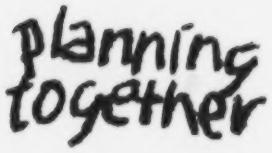
CHAPTER 4: FINDING NEW DIRECTIONS AND PLANNING TOGETHER



STEP 1: DEVELOPING A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

Purpose:
To develop dreams of the future into a vision shared by all members of the planning group.

Helps Illustrate:
Many possible expressions of the interests, gifts and capacities of the focus person.Changes in home, work and social situations. Ideas about both formal (paid) and informal (non-paid) supports.

Facilitator Tips:
Begin by reviewing ideas provided by the person from the Personal Profile process. Help the group generate possibilities by asking, "What experiences would I want if I was in this person's shoes?" Which ideas have the most spark? Write them larger or highlight them in **yellow**. After many ideas have been collected, have the group decide which ideas are most important to work on first. Establish a focus for the next step of brainstorming.

STEP 2: BRAINSTORM STRATEGIES

Purpose:
To brainstorm a number of strategies or bringing the ideas discussed during Step 1 into reality.

Helps Illustrate:
Concrete ways to make things happen. Ways to build on the opportunities discovered throughout the process.

Facilitator Tips:
Begin the brainstorming session with a focus. Allow participants to brainstorm on one focus area before moving on to another. Try to record every idea and the person who thought of it.

STRATEGIES

PERSONAL CARE ATTENDANT

Mary	bring the need to the social action group at church.
Martha	put together a one-page description of the type of PCA support needed: the number of hours, role, etc.
Mary	look into a home health aide agency. Mary knows someone who works in one.
Pat & George	will be speaking to the social action group.
Clair	will come up with a date for a trip away so we can begin to plan the supports.
Group	Mary, Kelly, Jane, Nancy and Martha will meet as a subcommittee to discuss March respite care supports.

DRIVERS

Laura	can offer some rides, will bring up the need at the Junior Women's board meeting.
Mary	people at the church may be able to help drive.
Michelle	can look into Central CT state college for students who can drive. What about the medical school, dental school or women's college?
Group	Mary, Michelle and Martha will meet as a subcommittee to discuss transportation issues.

planning together

HOUSING

Russ	talking to housing commissioner about co-op development. Maybe member of the co-op could own their own development through a "special projects" program.
George	look into Catholic land and property holdings.
Everyone	Look for a building or property near W. Hartford Center. We are looking for a 6-unit space of about 6,000-7,000 sq. ft.

Other ideas for later:

Have a van as part of the co-op.
Hook into graduating college students as co-op members.
Create a housing subcommittee.

STEP 3: OPPORTUNITIES AND OBSTACLES

Purpose:
To identify opportunities and acknowledge obstacles in the implementation process.

Helps Illustrate:
Opportunities in the environment (e.g., connections to people, community resources, new service trends, etc.) that can help people accomplish their ideals. Real obstacles that challenge the group to be more creative.

Facilitator Tips:
Only use this map if needed. Don't call attention to obstacles unless they come up in the brainstorming session. Never miss the chance to record opportunities. When people identify an obstacle, see if it can be turned into an opportunity.

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planning together

OPPORTUNITIES:

1. It is possible to create mixed-income, mixed-occupancy co-op housing.
2. Co-ops provide a built-in back-up in addition to PCA support.
3. The Junior Women's League Club and social action group associations.
4. The Catholic network and associated property. Holy Family retreat house has land that goes down to Woodruff Street. N.W. Catholic High School has some property as well.
5. Oakhill has some land available.
6. Mary knows about a piece of property in W. Hartford.
7. The greater Hartford Community meeting announced that lots of money is available for low-cost housing.

OBSTACLES

1. ZONING, zoning, zoning, zoning.
2. Mixed occupancy housing makes it harder to use state and federal money sources.
3. The Oakhill land isn't a good location, and it's too "institutional" by association.

STEP 4: SETTING PRIORITIES AND MAKING COMMITMENTS

Purpose:
To help group members make commitments to take action.

Helps Illustrate:
Several concrete action steps to be implemented before the next meeting. The people willing to take action. The date of the next meeting.

Facilitator Tips:
Review the strategies generated during Step 2. Help people volunteer to work on the strategies that offer the most promise. Model making a commitment by going beyond the role of facilitator. Try to finish with at least five to ten action steps. Don't leave the meeting until the next meeting time and place are set.

running meetings

FORMAT FOR FOLLOW-ALONG MEETINGS

Purpose:
To learn from efforts to implement the ideals.

Helps illustrate:
Action taken on behalf of the person, both successful and less successful efforts.

Images of the future will change as they interact with reality. Sometimes opportunities will emerge that never seemed possible.

Facilitator tips.
Invite people to review their activities since the last meeting. You may want to use the commitment list from the last session to get people started.

Once a review is complete, repeat the strategy brainstorm session, priorities and commitments.

Set the next meeting date and time.

CHAPTER 5: RUNNING AN EFFECTIVE MEETING

Graphics and frameworks help facilitators manage a lot of information and provide a focus for a group. This chapter provides additional helpful hints for running effective meetings.

running meetings

PREPARE FOR EACH MEETING

Effective facilitators plan each session in advance. A facilitator should:

1. Meet or call key people to discuss the agenda for the meeting. Clarify what the group hopes to learn and accomplish from this meeting.
2. Keep a notebook of frameworks and ideas. Design, choose or adapt a framework to fit each meeting. Review the color-coding or sorting system you will use.

WORK WITH A PARTNER

Many facilitators prefer to work in teams. Co-facilitators complement each other and provide mutual support. A facilitator should decide:

1. What are my strengths, and who can I work with who complements and strengthens my approach to facilitation?
2. How will we divide the tasks of facilitation and follow-along?
3. How can we give each other feedback after the meeting?

INCLUDE THE FOCUS PERSON

An effective facilitator designs the meeting to include the focus person and family members as much as possible. Some hints for including the focus person are:

1. Choose a meeting place and time that is accessible and comfortable for the focus person and his or her family.
2. Design a role for the focus person during the meeting. Provide assistance to help the person be competent in this role.
3. Arrange the personal assistance or family support required to assure inclusion.

running meetings

SET TIME LIMITS

An effective facilitator creates clear boundaries for the beginning and ending of a meeting. Hints for time management include:

1. Begin with a clear focus for each meeting.
2. Call members together within the first ten minutes of the set meeting and bring people in as they arrive.
3. Set a clear ending time for the formal meeting (stay within two hours) while inviting people to stay longer to visit informally.

BEGIN THE MEETING, MAKE PEOPLE COMFORTABLE

Effective facilitators begin every meeting with an overview of the session and invite group members to be comfortable and have fun during the meeting. The overview includes:

1. Introduce all group members. Find personal or funny ways to help each person join the group. Make a cue card of creative group introduction strategies.
2. Review the purpose and agenda for each meeting.
3. Briefly summarize the event leading up to this meeting.
4. Tell people there will be a break. Locate restrooms. Encourage people to come and go during the meeting if they need to.
5. Arrange for snacks and drinks and make these available during the meeting.
6. Arrange for a location that encourages informality.

MAKE AND KEEP A RECORD OF THE MEETINGS

An effective facilitator makes a record of key meetings. A Futures Plan is not intended to produce paperwork; however, an accurate record of the original profile, plan and critical follow-along meetings is important. The facilitator should:

1. Transcribe the meeting records using drawing and print. Use this opportunity to clarify and/or edit the original record.
2. Take photographs of meeting records.
3. Ask someone in the group to take notes off the large chart paper onto regular-sized paper.
4. Keep the original meeting records in long rolls and label the outside of the roll for easy reference.

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running meetings

PREPARE A FACILITATOR KIT

An effective facilitator uses a variety of tools that support the meeting process. The facilitator should ensure that markers and tape will not damage any writing surface of wall space. The facilitator should have:

1. A variety of different-sized writing tablets and flip chart paper.
2. A number of water-based colored markers and pens.
3. Masking tape.
4. Notecards of meeting frameworks and hints.

USE UNDERSTANDABLE LANGUAGE

An effective facilitator deciphers professional, human service jargon into common language. Hints for translation include:

1. Ask members to explain any acronym used.
2. Translate technical words, bureaucratic categories and other labels and phrases that are not commonly used by the general public. Set a standard for using common words.

MAKE SUMMARY STATEMENTS

An effective facilitator makes regular summary statements to help the group make sense of the information discussed. Hints include:

1. Make a summary statement when making a transition from one framework to the next.
2. Make a summary statement before taking a break.
3. Make a summary statement at the end of the meeting and help people set priorities for getting started and make commitments to action.

HAVE FUN!

An effective facilitator sets a standard of informality and encourages a lively group discussion. While everyone finds his or her own style for this, some hints are:

1. Encourage humor. Laughter is the sign of a community meeting.
2. Find many ways to help all members contribute and to value every contribution.
3. Encourage celebrations, build a fire, order a pizza, make a toast.

Good facilitators use many techniques and model many small actions that help a group work together. One way to develop a style is to watch effective facilitators and make notes of the many ways they encourage people. Combine these skills and habits with your own and build a recipe file of helpful hints from your own experience.

problem solving

Share the commitment; share the vision, together we will enrich each other.

Beth Mount

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CHAPTER 6: PROBLEM SOLVING AND RENEWAL

An effective facilitator must find many ways to maintain the energy and commitment of a planning group over time. This chapter provides several tips for ongoing problem solving and renewal of groups.

problem solving

DESIGN A STRATEGY FOR FOLLOW-ALONG

From the start of the planning process, the facilitator looks for people who agree to meet regularly to solve problems over time. The method for follow-along may vary from group to group as long as some continuity and commitment to the process is planned. The facilitator should consider these questions when designing a follow-along process:

1. What are the best methods for follow-along for this group?
2. How often should people meet to gain momentum in the process of change?
3. How often should the facilitator meet individually with the person and/or family between meetings?
4. Should there be subcommittees or smaller brainstorming groups around certain issues?
5. Who can facilitate the group? Who can be instructed to facilitate the group?
6. What would it take to support the focus person to lead his or her own group? What assistance is required?
7. To what degree must the facilitator stay involved until the group develops internal capacity to make things happen?

Even with the best design for follow-along, groups sometimes just get stuck. Members lose interest and run out of ideas. They may have too many options and can't find a focus, or they may face internal conflicts that can't be solved. The following section identifies common breakdowns and helpful remedies.

SEARCHING FOR NEW IDEAS AND SUPPORT

Breakdown:
Planning groups run out of energy and new ideas.

Remedy:
Seek ideas and energy from outside the group. Facilitators can encourage external activities for renewal such as:

1. Help group members attend conferences and workshops. Help group members make presentations at these workshops.
2. Find newsletters, publications and books that reflect the interests and challenges in the group. Help people attend these groups.
3. Find other self-help, advocacy and consumer groups and networks for group members to join. Help people attend these groups.
4. Help group members visit other people who face similar challenges. Help group members visit other places where people have found solutions to similar problems.
5. Help group members write proposals to obtain critical resources needed to implement their ideas.
6. Find people who serve as mentors or advisors even if they are not members of the group. Invite new people to group meetings to explore new ideas.
7. Help all group members find opportunities for self-development even if they are not the focus of the group.
8. Plan a celebration of milestones and accomplishments of the group. Plan an occasion to review accomplishments and revise the next phase of development.

problem solving

SETTING PRIORITIES

Breakdown:
People have too many options and too many ideas to work on at once. They can't get anything done because they are working on too many ideas at one time.

Remedy:
Find a focus.

1. The facilitator should meet with the focus person and one or two other people before a group meeting to identify and list each issue. Use a graphic worksheet to make a picture of all the issues.
2. Sort issues into high-, medium-, and low-priority categories.
3. Consider developing subgroups to address certain issues.
4. Present issues at the next group meeting and choose one or two issues as a focus. See who has the energy to work on each idea.
5. Select a leader for each subgroup.

INDEPENDENT LIVING WORKSHEET FOR JAN*

	ISSUES:	ACTION STEPS
★	HIGH • HOUSING	
	LOW • START-UP LOAN	
	MOD • MONTHLY INCOME	
★	HIGH • PERSONAL CARE SUPPORT MONEY	
	HIGH • PERSONAL CARE PROVIDERS	
	MOD • EMERGENCY BACK-UP SYSTEMS	
	LOW • TRANSPORTATION	
	LOW • VOCATIONAL SUPPORT	
	MOD • DOCTOR + DENTIST	

★ PRIORITIES + SUB-GROUPS

*JAN IS TRYING TO MOVE OUT OF A NURSING HOME

problem solving

MAKING DECISIONS

Breakdown:
The group has several good options and needs to choose the best alternative, or the group has several options and members disagree on the best option to pursue.

Remedy:
Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of each option and make a decision.

1. Meet with one or two people to identify each option. Use a chart to list and describe each option.
2. List the advantages (green) and disadvantages (red) of each option. Identify the action steps required for each option.
3. See which option has the most advantages and the most concrete strategies for making it happen.
4. Several options may need to be explored before a decision can be made. Delay the decision. Identify several strategies for exploration.
5. Create a new option that combines the advantages of several options
6. Select an option and take the decision back to the planning group for input.

SUMMARY

Like every other phase of the futures planning process, follow-along and renewal activities take a shape that fits the interests of the focus person, the commitments of the group, the investments of the facilitator and other advocacy and organizational change efforts in the external environment. Planning groups have natural cycles of activity, reflection, depression and renewal. The facilitator finds renewal strategies to fit the energy and needs of the group.

CHOOSING THE BEST OPTION WORKSHEET

OPTION #1	OPTION #2	OPTION #3	OPTION #4
HOUSING CO-OP RUN BY LARGE CO-OP ORGANIZATION	HOUSING CO-OP RUN BY CHURCH	MUTUAL HOUSING ASSOCIATION	RENTING AN APT. WITH SECTION 8
+ —	+ —	+ —	+ —
ACTION STEPS:	ACTION STEPS:	ACTION STEPS:	ACTION STEPS:

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Some people have lots of friends, and some have quite a few friends, but everyone...everyone in the whole world has at least one friend.

Joan Walsh Anglund

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